

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (amended) A sandwich structure for protecting a fixed or mobile installation or equipment having an interior and exterior, the interior of the equipment to be protected from a projectile coming from the exterior of the equipment, said sandwich structure comprising:

an outer plate having an outer side configured to face outside the equipment, the outer plate being configured to be attached to the equipment exterior, the outer plate being made of a first ductile material and designed to resist first impacts of projectiles and to absorb a part of the kinetic energy of the projectiles,

an inner layer having an inner side configured to face inside the equipment, the inner layer being made of a second hard material which is harder and less ductile than said first ductile material, and which is designed to stop projectiles that passed through the outer plate while having had said part of the kinetic energy absorbed,

spacers for disposing the outer plate at a distance from the inner layer, so that no part of the outer plate has any contact with the inner layer, and

fixing means for detachably fixing the outer plate to the inner layer at the location of the spacers.

claims 2-4. (cancelled.)

5. (amended) The sandwich structure according to claim 1, wherein the inner layer is made of steel and the outer plate is made of aluminum.

claims 6-12. (cancelled.)

13. The sandwich structure according to claim 1, wherein the outer plate has an entirely flat shape.

claims 14-16. (cancelled.)

17. (amended) The sandwich structure according to claim 1, wherein elastic elements are inserted between each spacer and the outer plate.

18. (amended) The sandwich structure according to claim 1, wherein each spacer has a tubular shape.

Claims 19-20 (withdrawn)

21. (amended) The sandwich structure according to claim 18, wherein *the* fixing means includes screws, the outer plate and the inner layer have holes for the passage of the screws, and each spacer is provided with a threaded bore, the outer plate and the inner layer being fixed to the spacer by a corresponding screw having passed through a hole of the outer plate and the inner layer, respectively, and being screwed into the threaded bore of the spacer.

Claims 22-23 (cancelled)

24. (amended) The sandwich structure according to claim 1, wherein the outer plate has holes for the passage of the fixing means therethrough, at least some of said holes loosely receiving said fixing means for enabling differential expansion of said outer plate and inner layer when the temperature changes.

25. (amended) The sandwich structure according to claim 1, further comprising:

conducting elements separate from the outer plate, said conducting elements being detachably fixed to said outer plate and extending between the outer plate and the inner layer to provide electrical continuity between the outer plate and the inner layer, each conducting element having a bore; and

attachment screws disposed in said bores at a distance from the inner layer for fixing the conducting elements to said outer plate.

26. (Previously presented) The sandwich structure according to claim 25, wherein the conducting elements are flexible to enable differential dilatations between the outer plate and the inner layer.

27. (New) The equipment according to claim 1, wherein the inner layer comprises plates of a vehicle bodywork, and the outer plate is disposed outwardly at a distance from the vehicle bodywork and is fixed thereto.

28. (New) The equipment according to claim 27, wherein the plates are steel plates.

29. (New) The equipment according to claim 1, wherein the outer plate is fixedly disposed outwardly at a distance from vehicle bodywork.

30. (New) A vehicle comprising bodywork having an inner space to be protected by a sandwich structure from a projectile coming from outside, said sandwich structure comprising:

an outer plate having an outer side facing outside and which is impacted firstly by said projectile, the outer plate being made of a first ductile material and designed to resist said first impact of the projectile and to absorb a part of the kinetic energy of the projectile;

an inner layer having an inner side facing the inner space, the inner layer being made of a second hard material which is harder and less ductile than said first ductile material, and which is designed to stop said projectile that passed through the outer plate while having had said part of the kinetic energy absorbed;

spacers for disposing the outer plate at a distance from the inner layer, so that no part of the outer plate has any contact with the inner layer; and

fixing means for detachably fixing the outer plate to the inner layer at the location of the spacers.

31. (New) Equipment having a sandwich structure that protects the equipment from a projectile coming from outside the equipment, the equipment comprising:

an interior and an exterior;

a sandwich structure, including:

an outer plate having an outer side facing outside the equipment, the outer plate being attached to said equipment exterior and made of a first ductile material and designed to resist first impacts of projectiles and to absorb a part of the kinetic energy of the projectiles,

an inner layer having an inner side facing inside the equipment, the inner layer being made of a second hard material which is harder and less ductile than said first ductile material, and which is designed to stop projectiles that passed through the outer plate while having had said part of the kinetic energy absorbed,

spacers for disposing the outer plate at a distance from the inner layer, so that no part of the outer plate has any contact with the inner layer, and

fixing means for detachably fixing the outer plate to the inner layer at the location of the spacers.